



# Department of the Legislative Assembly Annual Report 2021–22



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Cover photo from the launch of Aboriginal  
Changemakers by David Callow.

Department of the  
Legislative Assembly  
Annual Report 2021–22







# Legislative Assembly

25 October 2022

Hon Maree Edwards MP  
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly  
Parliament House  
East Melbourne Vic 3002

Dear Speaker

I have pleasure in forwarding to you the Annual Report for the Department of the Legislative Assembly for the year 2021–22.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B Noonan'.

**Bridget Noonan**  
**Clerk of the Legislative Assembly**

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# Clerk's overview

This is the report of operations for the Department of the Legislative Assembly for 2021–22. I hope it is of interest to members and the Victorian community.

Our Department exists to provide professional and impartial support to members so that they can fulfil their roles as legislators in the Chamber and in committees. We also undertake a range of community engagement, governance and compliance activities that are covered in this report.

A few days before the reporting period ended, Speaker Brooks advised members that as a consequence of being appointed to Cabinet, he would be absent from the office of Speaker. Under the Constitution, the Deputy Speaker automatically assumes all the duties of the office of Speaker in this case, until the House can elect a new Speaker. I thank Speaker Brooks for his guidance and leadership over the last five years, particularly during the uncertainties of COVID-19, and I look forward to working with Speaker Edwards.

Once again, the work of the Department of the Legislative Assembly saw us deliver services in an environment where the pandemic was never far from our minds. I explained in last year's report that we found opportunities in our new ways of working, and that has continued to be the case. The flexibility and robustness honed in the last few years have prepared the Department well for changes and challenges in the future.

The Department has also spent some time this reporting period reflecting on the way we go about our work, and departmental culture. It is a priority for me that staff find the Department a meaningful and engaging place to work. I am confident that this is the environment that will lead to the best outcomes for members and the community. I thank Assembly staff for the openness and consideration they have shown as we have tried new things, challenged our ways of working, and embraced change. They are a great team.

**Bridget Noonan**  
**Clerk of the Legislative Assembly**



# Departmental objectives and functions

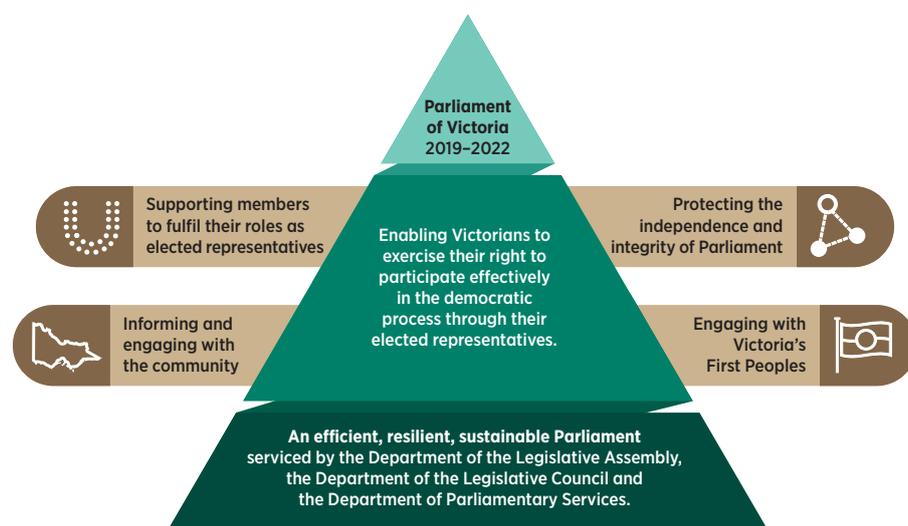
## Department of the Legislative Assembly

The Department of the Legislative Assembly supports members to fulfil their roles as elected representatives and enables Victorians to participate effectively in the parliamentary process. In support of this purpose we deliver apolitical, professional and innovative services to the Legislative Assembly and inform and engage with all Victorians. Headed by the Clerk, officers of the Department support the Speaker and the work of the Chamber, the operations of committees, and in the provision of information and community engagement services.

### Strategic directions and priorities of the parliamentary departments

The Parliament of Victoria, through its elected representatives, is accountable to the Victorian community for the provision and conduct of representative government in the interests of Victorians. The objective of all the departments of the Parliament is to deliver apolitical, professional and innovative services to support our elected representatives and the Parliament as an institution.

In fulfilling its constitutional purpose, the strategic directions of Parliament for 2019–22 prioritise four areas and focus the parliamentary departments on improving their efficiency, resilience and sustainability. The primary functions of parliamentary departments are to assist members to represent the people of Victoria and to ensure the independence and integrity of Parliament as an institution.



The strategic priorities of Parliament for 2019–2022.



# Report on operations

## 2021–22 at a glance



**62**  
bills initiated in  
the Assembly

**59**  
bills passed by  
the Assembly

**58**  
bills passed by  
both Houses



**54**  
sitting days

**390hrs 7mins**  
sitting hours

**7hrs 13mins**  
average sitting day

**10hrs 8mins**  
longest sitting day

**235**  
member allowance  
claims processed



**1,019**  
statements  
by members

**255**  
questions  
without notice

**639**  
questions  
in writing

**1,615**  
responses  
processed

**43**  
divisions

**41**  
petitions  
presented

**26,449**  
signatures  
on petitions

**1,410**  
documents  
tabled



**6.7%**  
increase in social  
media followers



**31**  
committee  
reports tabled

**223**  
submissions  
to committees

**84**  
committee  
meetings held

**192**  
public hearings  
held



**312**  
online incursions  
delivered

**8,779**  
students on  
online incursions

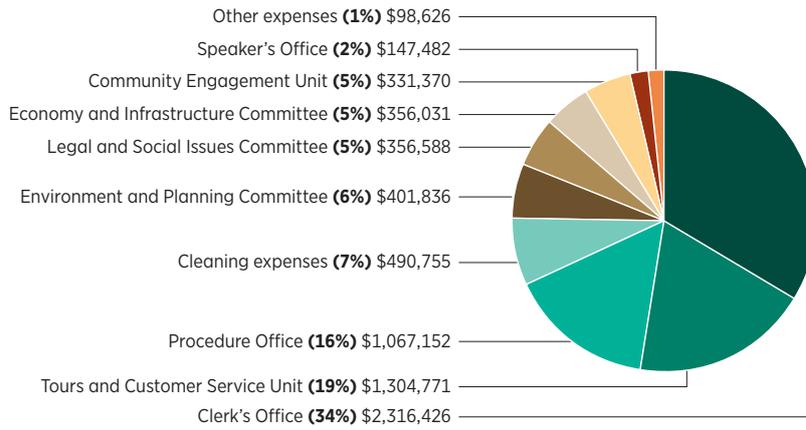
**165**  
school tours  
and role plays

**47**  
metropolitan  
schools visited

**1,305**  
students visited  
at schools

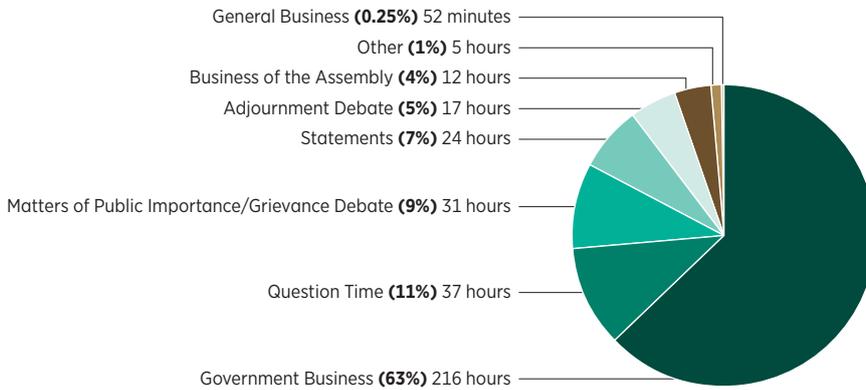
**3,645**  
students visited  
Parliament House

## Departmental expenditure



A breakdown of departmental expenditure in 2021–22.

## Breakdown of business in the Assembly<sup>1</sup>



A breakdown of time spent in the Chamber on different types of business in 2021–22.

<sup>1</sup> Not including mealbreaks. Numbers do not add up to 100 due to rounding.

# Chamber operations

## Impact of COVID-19 on sittings of the House

Throughout the second half of 2021, the Legislative Assembly again adopted a range of measures to sit safely during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Leader of the House moved a motion at the start of each sitting week setting out the sitting arrangements for that week. These motions varied based on the advice provided by the Chief Health Officer and the risk to members and staff at Parliament House. Safety measures included:

- changes to the order of business and reduced sitting hours
- different start and finish times so that the Assembly and Council were not sitting at the same time to reduce congestion in the building
- face masks required to be worn in the Chamber, except when a member was speaking
- no adjournment debate on some weeks to shorten the sitting day
- restrictions on numbers of members allowed in the Chamber and use of the lower public gallery to assist with social distancing
- voting in groups for divisions on bills on the Government Business Program to limit the number of members in the Chamber at any one time
- the ability for members to register their opinion with the Clerk on a division they did not attend
- remote participation and the ability for members to have some speeches incorporated into Hansard.

At the end of the sitting week starting 3 August, the House agreed to a motion fixing the next sitting date as 17 August 2021. The motion gave the Speaker the ability to set an earlier sitting date or, based on health advice, delay the next meeting and set a new date in consultation with the Leader of the House and Manager of Opposition Business. The Speaker used this provision to delay the next sitting until 7 September due to a rise in COVID-19 cases and the start of Melbourne's sixth lockdown on 5 August 2021. The Government released a revised sitting calendar with additional weeks to make up for the sitting weeks it lost. This included two consecutive sitting weeks in both September and October. The House subsequently sat for four weeks in September and October while Melbourne was in lockdown.

In the sitting week starting 16 November 2021 all members were able to be in the Chamber by including the lower and upper public galleries as part of the Chamber to maintain physical distancing. The final sitting week of 2021 returned to pre-COVID seating arrangements. All sittings in 2022 proceeded as scheduled, with no additional COVID-19 arrangements.

## Mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations for members

In October 2021, the Legislative Assembly agreed to a motion requiring all Assembly members to provide proof of first and second COVID-19 vaccinations, or proof of a booking or valid exception, to the Clerk by particular dates. Members who did not comply were suspended from attending the parliamentary precinct until the second sitting day in 2022. When moving the motion, the Leader of the House stated the reason for introducing this requirement was to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission and protect the health and safety of members, parliamentary staff, electorate officers and community members.

“ I ... thank the parliamentary staff as well as the Leader of the House and the Manager of Opposition Business for their work in ensuring that the Parliament can meet in a COVID-safe fashion

Speaker Brooks, Hansard,  
7 September 2021

The Member for Forest Hill was the only member to speak against the motion, and he requested his dissent be recorded when the motion was voted on by the House. He was also the only member who did not comply with the requirements of the resolution, and he was suspended from the parliamentary precinct and Chamber. A similar motion was moved again on 9 February 2022 to extend the vaccination requirements until 12 May 2022. On 22 March 2022, the Member for Forest Hill provided the required documentation to the Clerk and his suspension was lifted.

## E-petitions introduced

Petitions are an important component of our democratic process as they allow members of the public to directly raise issues and request action from the Parliament. Traditionally, the Legislative Assembly has only accepted paper petitions, but following a Standing Orders Committee report, the House adopted a new sessional order in June 2021 to allow the tabling of e-petitions.

With the assistance of the Information Technology (IT) Unit in the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS), we set up a system on the Parliament of Victoria website to facilitate the e-petitions process. Any Victorian resident can submit a request to start an e-petition. They must also arrange a member of the Legislative Assembly to sponsor their petition. Once the wording of the petition has been checked by the Clerk's Office and the member has confirmed they have agreed to sponsor the petition, it is published on the website for Victorians to electronically sign.

The first e-petition was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on Tuesday 12 October 2021. A further 20 e-petitions were tabled during 2021–22, with a total of 10,557 signatures collected. The sessional order will lapse at the end of the 59th Parliament.

## Addresses by First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria Co-Chairs

The Treaty Authority and Other Treaty Elements Bill 2022 recognises the establishment of a Treaty Authority and makes changes to the treaty negotiation framework and the administration of the self-determination fund. Ahead of the minister moving the second reading of the bill, the Legislative Assembly agreed to a resolution enabling members of the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria to address the House.



First Peoples' Assembly Co-Chairs Mr Marcus Stewart and Aunty Geraldine Atkinson addressing the House on 22 June 2022. Photo by Janusz Molinski Photography.

The Serjeant-at-Arms' office worked closely with government department staff and the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria to help coordinate the address to the House and associated events. On the day of the addresses, there was a smoking ceremony on the front steps of Parliament and a Welcome to Country conducted by Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Elder, Uncle Andrew Gardiner. The Speaker invited Bangerang and Wiradjuri elder, Aunty Geraldine Atkinson, and Nira illim bulluk man of the Taungurung nation, Mr Marcus Stewart, onto the floor of the House. They read out the names of the members of the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria as those members proceeded through the Chamber and then addressed the House on the importance and significance of the bill and treaty.

## Complaint referred to Privileges Committee

The Member for Polwarth raised a complaint with the Speaker about Victoria Police issuing fines to constituents outside his electorate office, on the basis that they were breaching COVID-19 restrictions. There were two main allegations in the complaint—that Victoria Police were interfering with constituents meeting with their local member, and that the Parliament had released footage from the electorate office CCTV cameras without consulting the member.

On 16 November 2021, the Speaker informed the House that he believed there was a prima facie case of improper interference with the free performance of the member's duties, which may be a contempt of Parliament, and gave the privilege complaint precedence in the House. The Member for Polwarth moved that the complaint be referred to the Privileges Committee, which was agreed to. The Privileges Committee had not reported the results of its investigation at the end of the reporting period.

## Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment (Pandemic Oversight) Bill 2021

The Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment (Pandemic Oversight) Bill 2021 created an ongoing government framework for managing pandemic response, rather than continuing to extend the state of emergency legislation. It also created mechanisms for the Parliament to scrutinise and disallow pandemic orders.

The bill was introduced and passed through the Assembly in a single sitting week. The Government introduced the bill on Tuesday 26 October, with the second reading and the release of the bill on Wednesday morning and debate continuing throughout Wednesday and Thursday. The bill passed the Assembly under the Government Business Program on 28 October, with no amendments.

The bill saw a longer debate in the Legislative Council, continuing over two sitting weeks and on one occasion debating through the night and well into the following day. The Assembly received 30 suggested amendments from the Council on 1 December, and the House agreed to make all those amendments the same day.

On 2 December, the Council agreed to the bill with 53 additional amendments. When the amendments were brought on for debate in the Assembly, the Speaker advised that he was of the opinion that one of the amendments was a direct infringement of the privileges of the House in that it sought to force an appropriation from the Consolidated Fund, a matter that under the *Constitution Act 1975* must originate in the Legislative Assembly. Instead of refusing to entertain the amendment, in the interests of a speedy passage of the bill, the Assembly decided to endorse the Speaker's statement but refrain from its right to exert its privilege, agreeing to all 53 amendments and completing the passage of the bill through the Parliament.

The bill prompted significant community interest and substantial media coverage. There was a near daily presence of protestors gathering on the steps of Parliament to oppose the bill and health measures surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic more generally. Weekends saw large, organised protests throughout the city. The nature of the protests prompted many members to comment in the House on their numbers and behaviour. We are grateful to Victoria Police and DPS Security who provided additional support to ensure the safety of everyone on the precinct.

## Absence of the Speaker

During the last sitting week of May 2022, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Hon Colin Brooks, was absent due to a COVID-19 infection. This resulted in the first application of revised Standing Order 21—Absence of Speaker. This standing order was revised in November 2019 following a recommendation from the Standing Orders Committee, and no longer requires the Clerk to advise the House of the Speaker's absence. The Deputy Speaker automatically performs all the duties of the Speaker in their absence. So Deputy Speaker Maree Edwards took the chair for the week without any note of it in the House. When the Speaker returned on 7 June, he chose to acknowledge the Deputy, thanking her for stepping in.



Deputy Speaker Maree Edwards performed the Speaker's duties in the last sitting week of May 2022.

## Condolence motions and statements

Over the past year, the House gave tribute to a number of former members and individuals who made a significant contribution to Victoria.

The last sitting week of 2021 saw the House agree to a condolence motion that acknowledged the services of Sir James Gobbo AC, CVO, QC, former Governor of Victoria, Lieutenant Governor and Judge of the Supreme Court. Members contributed to three separate condolence motions for former ministers: the Hon Robert (Robin) Cooper, the Hon Ronald (Bunna) Walsh and the Hon Tom Reynolds. As per the Assembly's custom, the Speaker announced the deaths of former members Denise Allen and John McGrath AM.

In April 2022, members addressed the House in tribute of the late Shane Warne, acknowledging his contribution to the game of cricket and the people of Victoria.

In May 2022, the Minister for Police, Shadow Minister for Police and member for Mildura made statements by leave on the late Senior Constable Bria Joyce who died in the line of duty.

## Joint sittings

Joint sittings of the Houses are required to fill vacant positions in the Legislative Council, Senate and positions with certain boards. During 2021–22, three joint sittings were held.

On 2 December 2021, the Assembly received a message from the Council proposing a joint sitting for two purposes. One was to fill the vacancy left due to the resignation of Senator Scott Ryan, and the other was to fill the vacancy left due to the resignation of Council member, Edward O’Donohue. The message was agreed to and that afternoon at 4.45 pm, the Council and Assembly members all gathered in the Legislative Assembly Chamber. The Senate vacancy was filled by Greg Mirabella and the Council vacancy filled by Cathrine Burnett-Wake.

Sadly, one of the reasons for the next joint sitting was to fill the Senate position left vacant due to the death of Senator Kimberley Kitching. On Wednesday 6 April 2022, the Assembly and Council met in the Assembly chamber to fill both the Senate vacancy and a position in the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation due to James Newbury stepping down from the board. Jana Stewart was chosen to fill Senator Kitching’s former seat, and David Morris was elected to the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation.

The final joint sitting was slightly more unusual. In April 2022, Legislative Council member David Limbrick resigned his seat to be a candidate for the Senate at the 2022 Federal election in May. Under s 62 of the *Electoral Act 2022*, a Council member can notify the President of their intention to contest a Federal election, and the joint sitting to choose their replacement must be delayed until after the result of that election has been officially declared. Accordingly, the joint sitting was delayed until June. Mr Limbrick did not secure a place in the Senate and the joint sitting on 22 June 2022 reappointed him to the seat he previously occupied.

## Change to sessional orders—order of business

On 16 November 2021, the Government moved a motion to change Sessional Order 3 altering the order of business. Question time now takes place at 2.00 pm every day. To accommodate this change on a Wednesday, the matter of public importance or grievance debate was moved to 4.00 pm.

## Disallowance of pandemic orders

The *Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment (Pandemic Oversight) Act 2021* introduced parliamentary oversight mechanisms for pandemic orders. It established a new joint investigatory committee, the Pandemic Declaration Accountability and Oversight Committee, that can recommend disallowing a pandemic order or related legislative instrument. If the committee makes such a recommendation, a joint sitting of both Houses can vote to disallow the pandemic order.

The Legislative Assembly Standing Orders Committee recommended a new Assembly sessional order to ensure a joint sitting is convened in a timely manner, and a new joint sessional order to set out the procedures for the joint sitting. On 8 February 2022, the Assembly agreed to all recommendations without debate and sent a message to the Legislative Council requesting their agreement to the proposed joint sessional order. As at the end of June 2022, the Council had not agreed to the joint sessional order.

## Question without notice to a private member

June 2022 saw the Assembly's first question without notice directed to a private member. The Member for Mildura asked the Member for Shepparton about the urgency of the member's notice of motion, which recommends allocating time for non-government business each sitting week. The Assembly currently allows no time for non-government business, which the Member for Shepparton regularly raises as an issue.

While members have tried to direct questions to private members before, they were always ruled out under the narrow parameters in standing orders and previous Speakers' rulings. SO 53(2) allows questions to private members about business of the House in which that member is concerned. Speakers have ruled that this restricts questions to item under the member's name on the notice paper, and about the timing and procedure of debate, rather than the content. This question was allowed because it was about the timing (urgency) of the member's motion.

## Committee operations

### Adapting committee operations to a COVID-19 environment

During 2021–22, our parliamentary committees embedded many of the positive changes to work practices adopted during the previous two years. A significant proportion of committee meetings were conducted online, along with a number of public hearings. This was facilitated for joint investigatory committees through ongoing amendments to the *Parliamentary Committees Act 2003* in March 2022 that allowed members to count for quorum and vote using remote participation. Prior to these amendments, the Act had been amended to allow these arrangements for a limited time only. Legislative Assembly standing committees have always had this capacity through the standing orders.

As the year progressed, some committees elected to return to in-person hearings for a portion of their inquiries, and were also able to return to regionally-based hearings and site visits. Most committees adopted a mixed approach to taking public evidence, with a balance between broadcasts of in-person hearings, and exclusively online hearings. This allowed committees to engage effectively and widely with the community, and will broaden engagement with stakeholders in future.

Most of the innovations introduced in response to the COVID-19 environment have now been adopted as ongoing practice by the parliamentary committees and offer a number of positives for committee operations, allowing members (particularly those from rural and regional seats), staff and stakeholders more convenient access to committee deliberations, meetings and hearings.

## Legislative Assembly Standing Committees

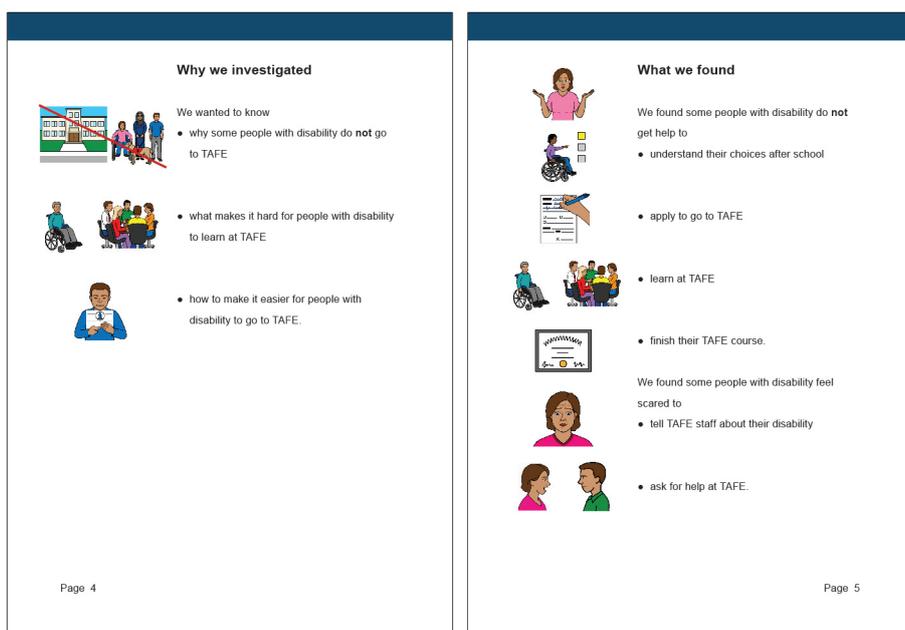
### Economy and Infrastructure Standing Committee

#### Inquiry into access to TAFE for learners with disability

The Economy and Infrastructure Standing Committee tabled its final report for this inquiry early in the reporting period, having completed its consultations in 2020–21. During the consultation phase, the Committee made a concerted effort to engage with people with disability, including receiving evidence in Auslan.

The Committee's final report was tabled in September 2021 and made 44 recommendations aimed at addressing the barriers learners with disability face when trying to access and participate in TAFE. Key recommendations included the employment of transition officers to help students with disability navigate the transition into TAFE, providing learners with disability wraparound support, informal peer networks, better access to assistive technology and more flexibility in course design and assessment. The Committee also recommended further professional development for teaching and frontline staff, and the sharing of resources and information across the TAFE network.

In a first for Victorian committees, an Easy English summary of the final report was published alongside the report.



Pages from the Easy English summary of the Economy and Infrastructure Committee’s final report on access to TAFE for learners with disability.

### Inquiry into Commonwealth support for Victoria

The terms of reference for this inquiry asked the Committee to examine the adequacy of Commonwealth support for Victoria, particularly Victoria’s GST share.

The Committee called for submissions in September 2021, receiving ten submissions. Based on the submissions, in addition to looking at Victoria’s share of GST revenue, the Committee chose to consider the level of Commonwealth investment in Victorian infrastructure, Commonwealth support for local government and Commonwealth assistance with COVID-19 recovery efforts. The Committee held two days of public hearings via Zoom, hearing evidence from economists, government officials, thinktanks and representatives of local government, social service and regional organisations.

In its final report, tabled in March 2022, the Committee found that Victoria, and all other Australian states and territories, except Western Australia, will lose GST revenue when new GST funding arrangements take effect in 2027–28. The Committee made seven recommendations, including that the Victorian government work with the other adversely affected states and territories to advocate that the federal government revert to the former GST distribution arrangements. The Committee also recommended the Victorian Government advocate for more infrastructure investment in Victoria, increased support for local government and additional support to assist recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Inquiry into Victorian universities’ investment in skills

The terms of reference for this inquiry ask the Committee to explore how Victorian universities can play a greater role in ensuring a pipeline of skilled workers to support a growing economy. They specifically request the Committee to consider the priority skills areas of health, agriculture, community services, as well as regional skills gaps and the skills Victoria needs as it works towards a clean economy.

The Committee called for submissions in March 2022 and received 26 submissions. The Committee held three days of public hearings via Zoom, including roundtables with representatives of Victorian universities and Victorian dual-sector universities. The Committee will table its final report in the next reporting period.

## Environment and Planning Standing Committee

### Inquiry into environmental infrastructure for growing populations

Following extensive public hearings, community engagement and site visits in 2019 and 2020, the Committee tabled its final report on environmental infrastructure for growing populations in February 2022.

The Committee examined community access to parks and open space, bushland, waterways, sporting fields, forests, nature reserves and wildlife corridors. The report made a total of 57 recommendations to the Victorian Government around improving the provision of environmental infrastructure for growing populations.

### Inquiry into apartment design standards

In August 2021, the Committee received a reference from the Legislative Assembly to conduct an inquiry into apartment design standards. The Committee commenced the inquiry in late 2021, sending over 300 letters to a wide variety of local and national stakeholders to inform them of the Inquiry and invite them to make a submission and/or participate in public hearings. Overall, the Committee received 58 public submissions from government, academics and research institutes, advocacy groups and non-government organisations.

The Committee held three rounds of public hearings throughout 2021 and 2022, hearing from a total of 52 witnesses from 22 organisations across the country. The Committee also conducted site visits to multiple apartment complexes in Elwood, West Melbourne, Fairfield, and Burwood East. The Committee is finalising its report which will be tabled early in the next reporting period.



Members of the Environment and Planning Committee and representatives from the Australian Institute of Architects making a site visit as part of the apartment design standards inquiry.

## Legal and Social Issues Standing Committee

### Inquiry into responses to historical forced adoptions in Victoria

The Committee tabled its final report for the Inquiry into responses to historical forced adoptions in Victoria on 8 September 2021. It found that measures to address the consequences of historical forced adoptions and the response from governments and non-government organisations had so far been inadequate. The final report contained 56 recommendations that aimed to address the injustices of past policies and practices that forcibly separated mothers and babies. They included a comprehensive redress scheme, provision of specialised and flexible mental health support services, and improved access to adoption records. The Committee also recommended the implementation of integrated birth certificates and measures to improve the transparency of current adoption laws to avoid repeating mistakes of the past.

The Government tabled its response to the report on 10 March 2022.

### Inquiry into support for older Victorians from migrant and refugee backgrounds

In August 2021, the Committee received terms of reference to inquire into support for older Victorians from migrant and refugee backgrounds. It was asked to consider service adequacy for culturally diverse older people, ways to improve their mental and physical wellbeing, and specific issues such as social isolation, civic participation, digital literacy, elder abuse, and culturally appropriate aged care.

To collect evidence from people with lived experience, the Committee consulted with experts in the sector to develop a community engagement plan, which included an online submission form in 10 languages, an Easy English submission guide and social media audio clips in community languages. The Committee received 73 submissions, including 32 submissions from people with lived experience. From January to March 2022, five days of public hearings were held online and in person at Coburg, Geelong and Ballarat. Interpreters were arranged for witnesses who required them. The Committee's final report will be tabled early in the next reporting period.

“ Throughout this inquiry the committee heard time and time again how these harms have continued and how long-term and meaningful action is long overdue.

Ms Natalie Suleyman MP,  
Chair, Legal and Social  
Issues Committee



Members of the Legal and Social Issues Committee and witnesses appearing at public hearings for the inquiry into support for older Victorians from migrant and refugee backgrounds.

## Joint Investigatory Committees

### Pandemic Declaration Accountability and Oversight Committee

The Pandemic Declaration Accountability and Oversight Committee was established on 15 December 2021 when the Premier made a COVID-19 pandemic declaration under new pandemic legislation that came into effect at this time. The Committee is the first dedicated parliamentary oversight committee for government responses to the COVID-19 pandemic in Australia.

The Committee's functions are contained in the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*. These involve reviewing pandemic orders issued by the Minister of Health, including:

- whether pandemic orders comply with the requirements of the Act
- compatibility with human rights under the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*, including whether the Minister has adequately explained limitations of these rights.

The Committee also examines broader issues relating to pandemic orders, such as inconsistencies in their requirements and implementation issues.

The Committee undertook reviews on three sets of pandemic orders:

- Visitors to Hospital and Care Facilities Orders
- Quarantine, Isolation and Testing Orders
- Mandatory Vaccination Orders.

The reviews involved a series of public hearings with key stakeholders, questions submitted to the Minister, departments and other stakeholders, and analysis of legal advice on human rights. The Committee plans to report on the orders later in 2022.

### Public Accounts and Estimates Committee

The Public Accounts and Estimates Committee (PAEC) tabled five reports in 2021–22 and commenced its inquiry into the 2022–23 budget estimates.

#### Budget Estimates and Financial and Performance Outcomes

The *Parliamentary Committees Act 2003* requires PAEC to inquire into and consider the annual budget estimates and report its findings to the Parliament. This inquiry considers the budget estimates of government revenue and expenditure and the financial and performance measurement information in the State's Budget. The Committee tabled its report into the 2021–22 budget estimates in October 2021. The report was tabled at a critical time, noting the social and economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

On behalf of the Parliament, PAEC also conducts an annual inquiry into the financial and performance outcomes. This inquiry assesses how effective and efficient the public sector was in delivering the initiatives and infrastructure investments outlined in the Budget. It complements the Committee's scrutiny of the budget estimates by assessing what the Government achieved compared to what it intended to achieve. Public hearings for the Committee's inquiry into the 2020–21 financial and performance outcomes were held in November 2021. The Committee tabled its report for this inquiry in April 2022. In reviewing the performance outcomes for 2020–21, the report showed changes in demand for services and methods of service delivery because of COVID-19, especially in the areas of health, housing, family violence, child protection and education.



The Public Accounts and Estimates Committee holding a public hearing for the annual financial and performance outcomes inquiry.

### Oversight activities

PAEC has oversight responsibilities in relation to two independent officers of the Parliament—the Victorian Auditor-General and the Parliamentary Budget Officer (PBO). In fulfilling these roles, the Committee undertook its regular yearly activities, including participating in the Auditor-General’s draft annual plan and budget process and reviewing the PBO’s operational plan for 2022–23. The Committee also provided feedback to the Auditor-General on performance audit specifications, about things like the scope or objectives of an audit or suggesting other stakeholders that could be consulted as part of the audit process.

Under the *Parliamentary Budget Officer Act 2017*, the Committee is responsible for reviewing and assessing the effectiveness of the PBO. The Committee undertook its first review of the PBO since its establishment in 2017 and tabled its report for this inquiry in September 2021. As part of this inquiry the Committee gathered evidence from Victorian, Australian, and international agencies, through public hearings and called for written submissions. The report examined best practice principles for independent institutions, including how the PBO’s legislative framework aligned with the Organisation for Economic and Co-operation and Development’s best practice *Principles for Independent Fiscal Institutions*.

### Gender responsive budgeting

PAEC has a role to examine the financial management of the State and identify improvements that can be made for the benefit of the Victorian community. In performing this function, the Committee undertook a review of Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) in Victoria and tabled its report for this inquiry in March 2022. The report considered best practice examples of intergovernmental organisations’ approaches to GRB and models for GRB implemented by international jurisdictions. The Committee received submissions and evidence from international, state and Commonwealth government departments and agencies, academics, research institutes, advocacy groups and non-government organisations. Using lessons learned from other jurisdictions, the Committee’s suggested recommendations focus on how Victoria can improve and drive sustainable gender equality outcomes through GRB.

## Audit follow up inquiry

The *Parliamentary Committees Act 2003* gives the Committee the power to conduct follow up inquiries on selected audits conducted by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO). Follow up inquiries consider the progress that has been made implementing recommendations made in an audit report tabled in the Parliament by the Victorian Auditor-General. In September 2019, the Committee resolved to conduct a follow up inquiry into the Victorian Auditor-General's report No. 253: Managing School Infrastructure that was tabled in May 2017. The Committee tabled an interim report on this inquiry in March 2022, advising that in the remaining time of the 59th Parliament it would not be possible to acquit the obligations arising under its terms of reference. The report noted the Committee's unanticipated workload in the 59th Parliament because of its inquiry into the Victorian Government response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for its statutory obligations to take precedence over self-referenced inquiries and concerns about the time that had lapsed since evidence gathering in early 2020.

## Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee

The Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee (SARC) plays an important role reviewing all bills introduced into Parliament and reporting its findings to both Houses. SARC does not comment on the policy aspects of legislation, but focuses on the use of certain legislative practices and allows the Parliament to consider whether the use of these practices is necessary, appropriate or desirable in all the circumstances.

In deciding whether to comment on a bill, SARC is guided by its terms of reference set out in the *Parliamentary Committees Act 2003*. These scrutiny principles allow SARC to look for things such as trespasses to rights and freedoms and inappropriate delegation of legislative powers. The *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* also requires the Committee to consider whether the bill is incompatible with human rights. SARC also has a role to examine all regulations and certain legislative instruments against terms of reference, in like terms for the scrutiny of bills, set out in the *Subordinate Legislation Act 1994*.

During 2021–22, SARC tabled in 17 Alert Digests that examined and reported on 77 bills and seven Acts as well as five regulations and one legislative instrument. SARC, through the Regulation Review Subcommittee, reviewed 167 regulations (including two OH&S Regulations and one national law) and 40 legislative instruments. SARC's review of subordinate legislation was published in the *Annual Review 2020, Regulations and Legislative Instruments* tabled September 2021.

## Domestic Committees

### Privileges Committee

The Privileges Committee tabled two reports in 2021–22 regarding persons referred to in the Legislative Assembly—Professor David Lindenmayer AO and Ms Sarah Rees.

The Committee also tabled a report to provide guidance for members making complaints under Part 3 of the *Members of Parliament (Standards) Act 1978*. Under the Act, only members can initiate a referral to a privileges committee via the relevant presiding officer, and only if the presiding officer determines that the matter should be referred.

In the Legislative Assembly the Speaker currently refers a matter if there appears to be a prima facie case for the allegation. The Committee received a number of complaints that it either did not consider sufficiently serious to pursue further, or that concerned behaviour during proceedings in the House. To assist members, the Committee tabled a report describing the types of matters it would give further consideration to, in relation to specific sections of the Act. The Committee stated that:

- it will not consider complaints related to debates in the House unless the matter is referred to it directly by the House
- for matters that are not related to debates in the House, it will only consider matters where the alleged conduct or language could be considered 'highly offensive' to a reasonable person under the circumstances
- complaints under s 13(1) must demonstrate a substantial interference with the work or functions of parliamentary committees, of the Legislative Assembly, or of Members of the Legislative Assembly.

On 16 November 2021 the House referred a privilege matter to the Committee for investigation and report, following a complaint raised by the Member for Polwarth regarding some events that occurred near or in his electorate office. The Committee's investigations were ongoing as at June 2022.

The Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council Privileges Committees jointly met with the Parliamentary Integrity Adviser (PIA) on 18 October 2021 and were briefed on the PIA's activities and on his report to the Parliament that was subsequently tabled on 26 October 2021.

## **Standing Orders Committee**

The Standing Orders Committee met once in 2021–22 and tabled its report on procedures for joint sittings under section 165AU of the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* on 8 February 2022. The report recommended the adoption of a new sessional order and a new joint sessional order, which set out the procedure for Parliament's consideration of a disallowance motion following a recommendation from a Pandemic Declaration Accountability and Oversight Committee report. The Committee recommended that the procedure be established initially as sessional orders so the arrangements could be trialled.

# Community engagement

## Tours and outreach program

The Tours and Customer Service Unit (TCSU) delivers a broad range of tours and outreach programs to school groups and the public, as well as providing apolitical customer services and support to the Chamber when the Legislative Assembly is sitting.

We offer tours of Parliament House to a variety of groups including students, community organisations and tourists. Our program includes general tours of the building and specialist tours, including gardens and architecture tours. For primary and secondary schools, we offer role plays and metropolitan school visits, which include a more detailed presentation on the parliamentary process.

In the second half of 2021, Parliament House was closed to the public for an extended period of time because of the pandemic. As a result, the tours and outreach schedule was reduced. In December 2021, the Parliament House front doors were finally open again. Our team was excited to welcome guests back to the building and saw increasing inquiries about various tour programs. From school term 1 2022, we re-connected with our community with more services and delivered educational tours for Victorian schools with an altered schedule to ensure safety measures, such as physical distancing. The table below contains details of the number of programs delivered.

Program	Sessions	Participants
Online incursions	312	8,779
Parliament role plays	60	1,489
Parliament school tours <sup>a</sup>	105	2,154
Community groups <sup>a</sup>	22	398
Metropolitan visits <sup>a</sup>	47	1,305
Garden tours <sup>b</sup>	3	10
Architecture tours <sup>b</sup>	3	25

<sup>a</sup> Metropolitan visits and other Parliament House tours recommenced from February 2022.

<sup>b</sup> Garden and Architecture tours recommenced from March 2022.

Unfortunately, we were unable to undertake any regional visits in 2021–22 due to travel and other restrictions related to the pandemic. The program will recommence in August 2022.

## Online incursions

Our most recent addition to the tours program is online incursions, an engaging experience delivered from Parliament House into primary and secondary school classrooms, covering topics such as how a law is made and the three levels of government. We originally developed and implemented online incursions in mid-2020 as a way of engaging school students during the pandemic, but they have also benefited those who do not have the opportunity to access our other programs, such as schools in remote regional locations.

Due to the increasing demand for online incursions, we identified the need for a dedicated space from which to deliver the program. With assistance from the Buildings

“ Grace and Michael were fantastic and incredibly knowledgeable in their fields—this was best tour we had in the city so far and I will definitely recommend it to other teachers.

School tour feedback

“ A really engaging experience for our students. Thank you for making politics fun and accessible to our students.

Role play feedback

Tours and Customer Service Unit programs delivered in 2021–22.

“ Bronwyn was terrific. She paced the lesson nicely and answered all the questions the students threw at her with expertise. The students learned a lot of information and enjoyed themselves.

Online incursion feedback

and Grounds, Hansard and IT teams, an online incursion studio was launched in February 2022. Using a green background screen, Tours and Outreach Officers are able to showcase different areas of Parliament House to online audiences through their presentations.



A Tours and Outreach Officer presenting in front of a green screen in the Online Incursion Studio.

Online incursions are taken by schools across Victoria. It is popular for schools in the metropolitan area. The program has also reached out to regional schools in Rosebud, Strafford, Beechworth, Wodonga, Shepparton, Daylesford, Hamilton, Peshurst, Warrnambool and Anglesea.



Locations of regional schools that participated in online incursions in 2021–22.



Locations of metropolitan schools that participated in online incursions in 2021–22.

## Community Engagement and Education Unit activities

### Parliament experiences

Throughout the year we connected with Victoria's diverse communities through events, learning initiatives, news services, and community partnerships. Many staff across the department contributed to the parliament-wide priority of informing and engaging with the community.

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to have an impact on the engagement programs we could undertake, particularly in the second half of 2021. Online engagement remained an important way of connecting with communities across Victoria. Our online program of events included webinars during the Australian Heritage Festival and National Science Week. Those webinars were coordinated with representatives from various organisations including the Shrine of Remembrance, Bendigo Art Gallery and The Royal Society of Victoria as part of our continuing efforts to partner with key Victorian institutions and show Parliament as an active participant in the community. Several hundred people viewed each online event live or watched the video replay.

For the second year in a row, we participated in the PHOTO international festival of photography. A photography installation on the front steps of Parliament House in April/May 2022 featured the work of four Victorian photographers who responded to the theme of 'meeting places'. Education workshops and resources linked to the exhibition helped to promote discussion of the theme and Parliament's role as a meeting place for the state's elected representatives.

### Learning

The ongoing evolution of our education activities and resources was a focus during the year. This included publishing new resources and conducting professional learning programs.

An official launch of the Aboriginal Change Makers education resource was held at Worowa Aboriginal College during National Reconciliation Week, attracting front page newspaper coverage. The resource was developed jointly by the college and our community engagement team. The official launch had been postponed from last year due to the pandemic. By 30 June 2022, the resource had been viewed more than 2,000 times. Deakin University has made the resource required reading for its pre-service teachers.



Dr Lois Peeler AM and Worowa students walking together to celebrate the launch of the Aboriginal Change Makers education resource. Photo by David Callow.

The Parliament Prize competition, which asks students to make a 90-second statement to parliament, continued as a flagship education activity. The 2021 competition attracted 633 entries from 158 schools across the state. One of the pleasing outcomes was that the winning entry in the Years 7–9 category led to action by two local councils, which agreed to address a road safety issue identified in the winning student’s statement.

We developed new education resources about issues before parliament, which were posted to our website. In addition, a resource was made available to members of parliament to assist them with activities they could undertake when visiting schools. We also conducted two professional programs for teachers and VCE legal studies students focusing on principles of justice and law reform. The online sessions were coordinated with the Law Foundation and involved judges, members of parliament and a senior parliamentary official. In total, 260 people participated with high levels of satisfaction recorded in feedback surveys.

A lecture program for Victoria University law and justice students continued into its fourth year, with online sessions held during the second half of 2021 and a return to in-person sessions at Parliament House during 2022. This financial year saw more than 500 students participate in the program, for which they are required to complete an assessment task.

### News and information

Through our news and information service, we kept informing the community about the work undertaken in the chambers and by parliamentary committees. The public launch of our new website provided the opportunity to better link the news pages on the website to our social media.

Our social media following continued to grow during the year, as shown in the table below. There was a 4% increase in subscribers to our news alert service, growing to more than 2,600 subscribers. In addition, we had many hundreds of subscribers to news alerts covering specific committee inquiry topics. The media releases issued through this service helped to generate media coverage of committee inquiries in metropolitan and regional media.

Channel	Following		Increase	
	30 June 2022	30 June 2021	number	per cent
Facebook	79,070	76,480	2,590	3
Instagram	6,021	5,639	382	7
LinkedIn	11,081	9,493	1,588	17
Twitter	8,946	7,933	1,013	13
YouTube	3,149	1,906	1,243	65

Parliament of Victoria’s social media following as at 30 June 2022.

We focused on producing a range of video material on the sittings and committee inquiries. This included the production of a new video series titled ‘Parliament in Focus’, providing a snapshot of parliamentary debates on legislation. The extra video content helped to boost our following on YouTube by 65% this year.

## Community partnerships

Improving accessibility of parliamentary information and events remained a priority during the year. Initiatives included employment of a Deaf youth associate, an online webinar during the National Week of Deaf People, ongoing production of our regular Auslan news bulletin about parliament, the public release of some parliament vocabulary in Auslan, and development of social stories to assist with visits to Parliament House by people who are neurodiverse. We also supported an Autism@VicParliament event conducted by peak body Amaze to recognise the fifth anniversary of a parliamentary committee report on services for people with autism.



Presenters and guests in Queen's Hall at the public launch of the first Autism@VicParliament week on 20 June 2022.

Another priority was youth engagement, and we commenced several new projects to develop youth-led content for our website and social media. The material from those projects will be available for use in the second half of 2022.

As part of our efforts to engage with a range of communities, including those who live further from Parliament House, we conducted online programs for community leaders from the Great South Coast, Geelong and Melton. The sessions covered the work of parliamentarians and committees.

A community project with the Eastern Community Legal Centre concluded with the completion and launch of an online community toolkit about parliament titled 'You, Me and MPs'. The toolkit, which includes video material translated into 10 languages, had been viewed around 1,000 times by 30 June 2022.



Community representatives joining members and staff at Parliament House for the launch of an online community toolkit on 4 April 2022.

The year ahead will include the election period, followed by the transition to the new parliament. This will provide a range of opportunities to tap into community interest around the commencement of the new Parliament, building on the work undertaken over the past several years to better connect parliament with the community it represents.

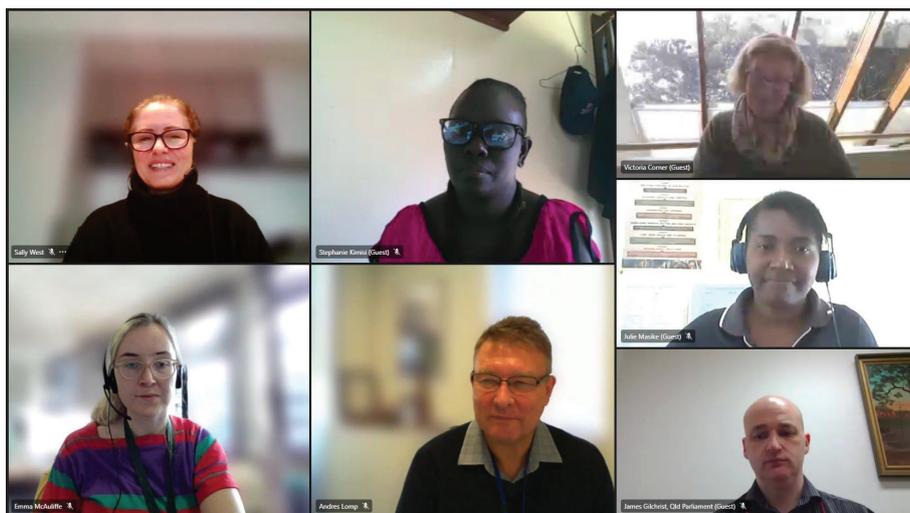
## Pacific Parliamentary Partnerships

The Victorian Parliament is twinned with the Parliaments of Fiji, Nauru and Tuvalu through a partnership program under the auspices of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (Victoria Branch). The twinning program is managed by the Clerk of the Parliaments, drawing on support from members, and staff of the three parliamentary departments. Although the COVID-19 pandemic and associated travel restrictions provided challenges for delivering traditional capacity building programs, the focus shifted to providing assistance online and continuing engagement with our twinned Parliaments in new ways. We are grateful for the support provided for our twinning program by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade as well as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). We also acknowledge the logistical support provided by the Australian Parliament.

### Committee masterclasses

A series of online masterclasses, aimed at committee staff and members in the Pacific, began in 2020. The online format, and ease of participation, proved successful, and the series has continued since. Our Parliament hosted some masterclasses, including other state parliaments and their Pacific twinning partners. Participants were from:

- Parliament of South Australia/Parliament of Tonga
- Parliament of Tasmania/Parliament of Samoa
- Parliament of Victoria/Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.



Sally West facilitating an online masterclass about committee reports and engagement on 17 June 2022.

The range of participants promoted good collaboration. The masterclasses addressed how committees can work with the media, how media relationships are best managed and what are some of the challenges faced and barriers to community engagement. Other topics included engaging young people in Parliament.

The final masterclass in the series was open to delegates from 14 Australian and Pacific Parliaments to come together and exchange ideas. This masterclass focussed on issues and challenges that we have faced during the pandemic, and how to plan for the future.

### Budget Analysis Support—Fiji Parliament

In July, Public Accounts and Estimates Committee staff from Victoria joined parliamentary colleagues from Fiji, New Zealand, Solomon Islands and a number of international organisations to scrutinise the 2021–22 Fijian Budget. Staff drafted briefing papers on a wide range of topics including the Water Authority of Fiji; the

Ministry of Health and Medical Services; the Ministry of Economy and Education. Staff also reviewed briefs prepared by the Fijian parliamentary research service.

### **Fiji Member Seminar—Key Development Issues**

In December, two Assistant Clerks from Victoria joined a team of international advisers to participate in a three-day regional workshop on key development issues. Presentations focussed on standing orders in relation to general provisions, questions, legislative procedures, financial procedures, amendments to motions and bills, and committees. The workshop was in partnership with the UNDP and the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji. Victorian parliamentary officers also addressed the group about the 'Parliamentary Response to the Pandemic—An Overview of the Good Practices in the Pacific'. The session presented a concise analysis of emerging good practices that various parliaments from different jurisdictions have adopted.

### **Fiji Member Seminar—Standing Committee on Economic Affairs**

In conjunction with the UNDP, our staff presented to Members of the Fiji Standing Committee on Economic Affairs focussing on the impact of COVID-19 on sustainable development goals integration and the tourism industry.

### **Nauru Governance Program**

Supported by the UNDP, the Nauru Governance Project moved into its next phase, with legislative and governance changes taking place in the Nauru parliament secretariat. Staff from New Zealand and Fiji Parliaments have coordinated support to the Parliament of Nauru as they transition to new autonomous administration and funding arrangements through the development of their Office of Parliamentary Services. Our staff provided some assistance with drafting financial provision regulations and terms and conditions of employment for staff.

### **Presiding Officers and Clerks Conference**

The annual Presiding Officers and Clerks Conference (POCC) brings together Speakers, Presidents, and heads of parliamentary departments from Australian and Pacific legislatures. Parliaments through Australia and the Pacific alternate hosting POCC. After a successful POCC in Brisbane in 2019, the Fiji Parliament was due to host the conference in July 2020. It was deferred a year due to the pandemic. In 2021, as international travel restrictions continued, Fiji Parliament concluded it was not able to host the conference. The next host venue is the Parliament of Victoria, meaning we will host the first POCC for three years. Preparations are well underway for an in-person conference in July 2022. We look forward to welcoming delegates from most Australian states and territories, New Zealand, Cook Islands, Niue, Kiribati, Tonga, and the Solomon Islands. In particular, we will be honoured to host delegates from our twinned jurisdictions of Fiji, Nauru, and Tuvalu.

### **Official visits and attachments**

Following easing of COVID-19 restrictions, we hosted a limited number of official visits from Consuls-General and Ambassadors representing countries across Europe, America and the Middle East. The visits provided an opportunity for the Presiding Officers, members of Parliament and parliamentary staff to share experiences, learn from each other, and build collaborative relationships. We look forward to welcoming more official visits and attachments from countries and legislatures across the world as travel continues to open up.

## Work experience program

Our redesigned secondary school student work experience program was launched in late 2021. Victorian secondary school students aged 15 years and older have the opportunity to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) to complete a work experience placement at the Parliament of Victoria, in either the Parliamentary Sitting Program (held during sitting weeks and administered primarily by the Serjeant-at-Arms Office) or Parliamentary Services Program (held during non-sitting weeks and administered by the Learning and Development team in DPS).

We received 120 EOIs for terms 1 and 2 of 2022:

- The majority were from female students.
- 94 were from students who lived within 50 kms of Parliament House.
- 26 were from students in rural or regional areas.
- 44 students attended a government secondary school.
- 39 attended an independent school.
- 37 attended a Catholic school.

It was pleasing to see this balance between students' residences and school types. Three students were chosen to complete a sitting week placement—one each from Northcote High School, St Josephs College, Echuca and The King David School, Armadale. Parliamentary sitting placements provide the opportunity to see the law-making process up close. Students will go behind the scenes with the staff who directly support parliamentary sittings, to get a deeper understanding of our democratic processes. All students provided very positive feedback about their week, and we thank all the members of Parliament who spent time with their constituent-students.

“ If I could do this a million times over again, I would.

“ I met so many amazing people and am so incredibly grateful for the way that they generously gave their time to explain things, create schedules, show me around or ask me about my ideas and opinions on things that really matter!

Feedback from work experience students

# Departmental initiatives

## Parliament's strategic directions for the 59th Parliament

Our Department works closely with the Department of the Legislative Council and DPS in achieving the Parliament's strategic directions. The directions are established early in each Parliament and reflect the objectives of the Presiding Officers and the Departments, and seek to be responsive to the needs of members and the Victorian community. For the life of the 59th Parliament, the strategic directions are:

- Supporting members to fulfil their roles as elected representatives.
- Protecting the independence and integrity of Parliament.
- Informing and engaging with the community.
- Engaging with Victoria's First Peoples.

We sought to partner with members where practical in the design and delivery of projects in support of the strategic directions, which brought a different focus to our service delivery approach.

## Supporting members to fulfil their roles as elected representatives

### Engagement with members and electorate officers

We aim to assist members and electorate officers perform their roles as effectively as possible. To provide this assistance, it is important that members and their staff are aware of the many different services our Department provides and how they can access these services. We therefore developed a Department of the Legislative Assembly contact sheet in an easy to access, print and read format. It lists all our different business units, the services they provide and how to access these services. We have sent a copy to the electorate offices of all members of the Legislative Assembly and will continue to be updated and distributed as required. It is also available to view on the Parliament's intranet site—Billy.

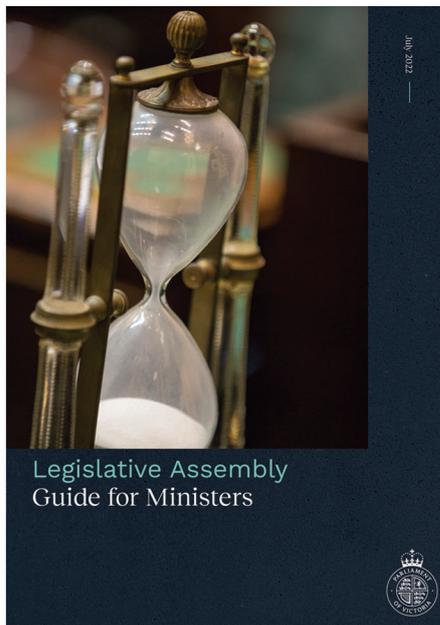
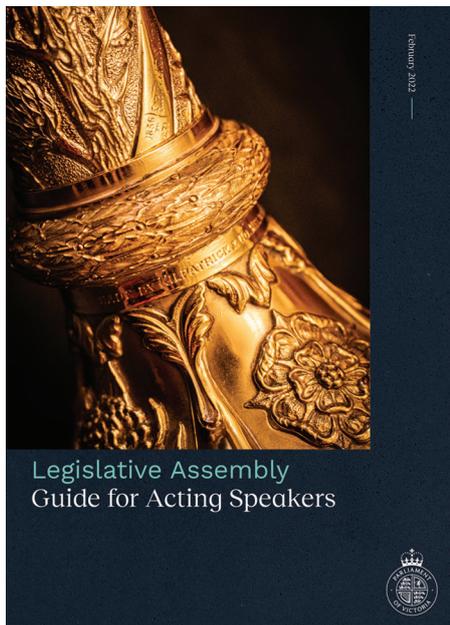
Members of the Tours and Customer Service Unit (TCSU) have contacted electorate offices and offered them the opportunity to book a meeting with members of the TCSU and Procedure Office. The meeting includes a presentation outlining the roles of these two teams and how members and electorate officers can access and use their services.

### Member induction and training resources

As reported in our last annual report, we are progressively developing a range of procedural resources and training options to assist members in the Chamber and on committees. We have tailored the resources to the different roles and provide them to members when they are appointed to new positions.

We started with shadow ministers and have provided a guide and offered one-on-one training to all Assembly shadow ministers. We next produced updated resources for Acting Speakers and offered individualised briefings for all members of the Acting Speakers panel. Towards the end of the reporting period, we finalised a Chamber

guide for ministers, and will offer briefings to all ministers in July. Prior to the Opening of the new Parliament, we are aiming to develop resources and training options for backbenchers, minor parties and independents.



Resources produced to assist members in the Chamber include the Guide for Acting Speakers and the Guide for Ministers.

## Election planning

Planning work is underway for the transition from the 59th to the 60th Parliament following November's state election. A project team of Legislative Assembly staff has been put together to plan for Assembly specific activities, including new member induction and training, and office moves within the parliamentary precinct.

Assembly staff have also joined Parliament's Election Working Group, a cross departmental team coordinating logistics for the wider Election 2022 project, and we are assisting the Legislative Council with arrangements for the Opening of the 60th Parliament.

## Protecting the independence and integrity of Parliament

### Performance and activities reporting

During 2021–22, a working group from the three parliamentary departments ran a successful member survey pilot project, surveying members on sitting days to gauge their views on how Parliament can best support them in their role as a legislator. The aim of the pilot was to test survey delivery methods and assess member willingness to participate in the process. Sixty-five per cent of members participated in the survey, with results shared with business units to inform their service delivery decisions. It is anticipated that in coming years, future surveys will form the qualitative basis for a reporting dashboard.

We also reviewed our school tour data in readiness for dashboard reporting. This has revealed some limitations in data capture in the current booking system, so we are exploring options for a new database. We hope to develop an improved school tour data reporting process for the new Parliament.

## Administration of members' allowances

Under the *Parliamentary Salaries, Allowances and Superannuation Act 1968*, the Clerk is the relevant officer for members' work-related parliamentary allowances. This role includes determining whether claims meet the requirements of the guidelines issued by the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and relevant regulations and publishing quarterly reports.

During 2021–22, the Tribunal made a determination adjusting the salaries and allowances of members of Parliament, which takes effect from 1 July 2022. There were no changes to the guidelines or regulations. The Clerks of both Houses jointly issued terms and conditions for the travel allowance and revised terms and conditions for the international travel allowance.

The Clerk's Office continued to administer claims and publish details in quarterly reports on the Parliament of Victoria website. Further information about the number of determinations made, and amounts paid in respect of each allowance, is published in the Department of Parliamentary Services annual report in accordance with the legislative requirements.

## Engaging with the community and Victoria's First Peoples

### Parliament of Victoria website redevelopment

On 1 June 2022, Parliament's new website went live. The new site includes a topic-based structure to allow users to find information more easily and quickly, parliamentary activity pages that explain processes in plain English, and new member profiles that make it easier to connect and find details about members of Parliament.

The new site is the product of significant work by all three departments to make our site easier to navigate, simpler to understand and more relevant, engaging and accessible to the general public. During 2021–22, the Assembly and Council Departments employed a Digital Content Officer to support the project and rewrite our content to ensure it is user-focused and mobile-friendly. She also coordinated the new member profiles, photography, and assisted with user acceptance testing.

### Reconciliation Action Plan

The three parliamentary departments have continued to progress the development of the first stage of a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), the Reflect RAP. We received conditional endorsement from Reconciliation Australia in 2021, subject to updates to timelines and final document design and formatting. Finalisation of the Reflect RAP and final endorsement by Reconciliation Australia is expected to occur in 2022–23.

### Disability Action and Inclusion Plan

The Disability Action and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) is a cross departmental initiative supported by the three parliamentary departments and is now into its third year. The internal working group consisting of staff from a variety of business units and the external working group comprising of representatives from several peak body disability support organisations, meet regularly to discuss the progress of the projects outlined in the plan and how the Parliament can be more accessible to people with disability.

Some of the notable achievements of the DAIP over the past year include:

- completion of the Access Appraisal Report of Parliament House
- commencement of a process for Communication Access Accreditation for the Parliament
- hosting a morning tea in recognition of International Day of People with Disability on 3 December
- participation in the Positive Action towards Career Engagement (PACE) Mentoring program in partnership with the Australian Network on Disability.



Bill Bainbridge facilitated a discussion with Amber Tratter from the Australian Network on Disability and Brent Alford from Speakers Bank at the International Day of People with Disability morning tea held on 3 December 2021.

## Community access to Parliament House

Parliament House re-opened to visitors after the COVID-19 lockdowns in December. Regular events and exhibitions continue to take place and Parliament House has once again become a place for the community to come and showcase their diversity, culture, or cause. A new online event booking inquiry form has been developed and placed on the Parliament's website to make it simpler for the public to book their event. The form has proven to be a more effective way of assisting the community. A full list of functions, events and exhibitions held at Parliament House is included in Appendix H.

## Information sessions for the public sector

The Procedure Office, together with the Council Table Office, delivered a series of online information sessions for staff who work in government departments and agencies. We ran sessions to update departments and agencies on new procedures as well as more general ones about parliamentary processes. Topics included:

- introduction to parliamentary procedure
- passage of a bill
- Parliament and the election period
- correcting errors in tabled documents.

We held the sessions online, kept them short and informal and encouraged questions and discussion. Each session was well attended with around 30–50 people participating. The sessions were well received and there was a lot of interest in learning more, so we plan to expand this program next year.

“ The session was excellent—well paced, informative and with a nice informal feel. It was also great hearing different voices over the session.

“ Great session—very informative

Feedback from online information session attendees

# An efficient, resilient, sustainable parliament

## Technology

### Parliamentary Information Management System

PIMS is the Parliamentary Information Management System. It is a custom-designed information management software developed specifically for parliaments. PIMS is already in use in several other Australian parliaments, and the Victorian Parliament is progressively implementing various modules for our business processes.

### Questions and Responses database

Following the launch of Parliament's new questions database last year, we began the task of loading older questions into the database. We loaded over 5,000 written questions, adjournment matters and constituency questions into the database as well as the response to each one. The database is now a complete record of the 59th Parliament.

### Committees module

The PIMS Committees module went live in April 2021. Since then, committee staff have been progressively updating the system with all inquiries from the 59th Parliament. The PIMS system directly connects to the new Parliament of Victoria website, enabling more efficient publication of committee information, such as submissions, transcripts of evidence and committee reports.

### Digitisation activities

We are continuing to digitise our historical records. This year we began the task of digitising our bill volumes. So far, we have digitised 130 volumes of bills—all the bills considered by the Parliament between 1856 and the 1980s. While the bills themselves are available on the legislation website and Austlii and are at the State Library, our collection includes all the amendments that were proposed for each bill, most of which were not agreed to by the Parliament and therefore are not recorded elsewhere. We have also digitised our remaining notice papers for publication on the Parliament's website and pre-1996 statutory rules for our records.

Having a digital copy of these records will give us an important back up if something were to happen to the physical volumes. It also makes them more accessible for our staff who will no longer need to locate a dusty volume high up on a bookshelf and who can now access the records even when working from home.

## Capability and culture

### Gender Equality Action Plan

During 2021–22, Legislative Assembly staff joined staff from the other two parliamentary departments to form a Gender Equality Steering Committee. With assistance from Melbourne-based gender consultancy firm The Equality Institute, the committee worked throughout the year to research and draft Parliament's first Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP). Under the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, the parliamentary departments are required to submit a GEAP every four years with the aim of promoting workplace gender equality and achieving gender equality in our policies, programs and services that impact the Victorian community.

One hundred and thirty-three parliamentary staff (including 31 Assembly staff) attended meaningful consultation sessions in October 2021. The sessions gave staff an opportunity to discuss gender equality and to brainstorm priorities for the GEAP. Four clear themes emerged from the consultation sessions:

- lack of workplace flexibility for men and women
- workplace bullying is ignored or condoned
- race is seen as a barrier to advancement/there is a lack of racial diversity in the organisation
- gender is a barrier to promotion.

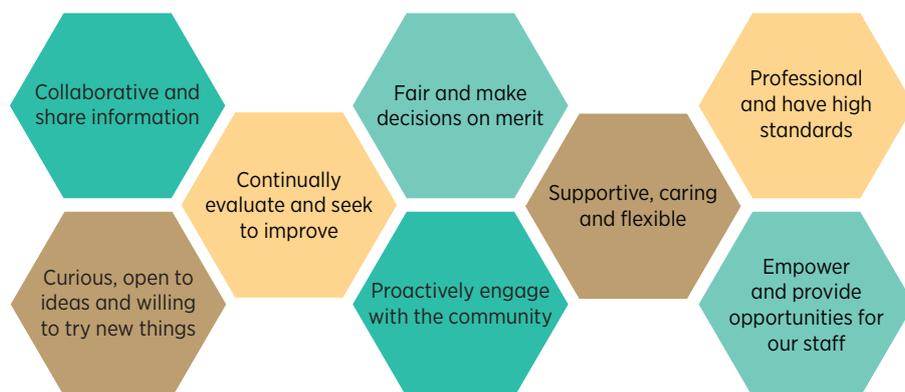


The Gender Equality Steering Committee.

Our GEAP is almost finalised and contains goals and strategies designed for the parliamentary departments to realise our vision statement of creating a safe, diverse and inclusive workforce where all people are treated equitably. The plan will be submitted in July 2022 and implementation will begin in the 2022–23 financial year.

### Strengthening our culture

Building on our work over the past few years to strengthen our culture, we formed a new Culture Advisory Group comprising staff across the Department's business units. The group's role is to identify opportunities to make the Department a great place to work, receive and respond to feedback, promote professional development, and drive progress towards making us the Department we want to be.



The attributes the Department is committed to modelling when working together and interacting with others.

The group meets monthly to regularly check in on the Department's culture and to identify initiatives for staff to build their networks and develop connections between teams.

Key initiatives over the past 12 months have included:

- increasing and improving the Assembly's reward and recognition initiatives and the development of principles to ensure they are transparent and consistent
- a focus on psychological safety, and the holding of psychological wellbeing workshops (discussed later in this report)
- monitoring remote and flexible work arrangements and ensuring consistent communication across units
- regular activities to connect staff across the Department, including trivia events and a bring your dog to work day
- a catch-up period during late December and early January where our staff were encouraged to take leave or catch up on existing work and limit meetings and new projects where possible
- staff surveys to monitor our performance and identify opportunities for improvement.

## Leadership and professional development programs

### Leadership programs

We continue to invest in the leadership capability within our department. Over the past 12 months, we conducted a range of training and development initiatives to support our current and emerging leaders.

Our Assembly leadership program brings together managers working across a range of business functions, including community engagement, procedural roles, committee roles and project roles. It aims to support a culture of collaboration across the Assembly's management group. Workshops are held every four to six weeks, with external facilitation, focussing on topics of interest such as managing hybrid and remote teams, building a positive culture, embracing change and inclusive leadership. The sessions provide an opportunity for staff to share and reflect on their experiences and learn from each other. To consolidate their learning, all participants also have regular coaching sessions and develop a personal development plan.

Three Assembly staff also completed an emerging leaders program with participants from the other two parliamentary departments. The group participated in a series of online and face-to-face workshops and learnt about topics such as personal effectiveness, emotional intelligence and leading through change. The group

also completed a workplace project to apply their learning. The project involved consultation with internal and external stakeholders and producing a report examining lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic and adapting to new approaches to work. The report made 30 recommendations about how the parliamentary departments could leverage the opportunities and experience of working during the pandemic in the areas of work processes, resources, culture and wellbeing.

## Psychological wellbeing initiatives

Our employees are required to be impartial and apolitical, while working within a political environment. Topics discussed in Parliament and committees are often controversial, and members from across the political spectrum often have different or opposing views on these issues. Our employees need to facilitate the debate of these topics and decision making by the House and committees. This means they regularly need to listen to committee witnesses sharing stories of personal trauma, or members putting forward a point of view an employee may strongly disagree with. Some topics can also impact different people differently, due to their own personal circumstances and experiences.

Through the Assembly's Culture Advisory Group and other feedback, we identified the need to better support the psychological wellbeing of our staff. We decided to engage our employee assistance program provider to conduct a series of psychological wellbeing workshops. The aim of the workshops was to have a discussion within each business unit about how we can best support our employees and teams can support each other to deal with difficult situations, while also ensuring we fulfil our core purpose of delivering an impartial and apolitical service to all members equally.

We held a program launch for the whole Department in March, followed by 15 workshops—five groups each participating in three one-hour workshops. The qualified psychologists who conducted the workshops then collated the feedback and developed a range of recommended actions for management to support teams and help staff to support each other—both proactively and reactively. We will present the outcomes to staff early in the next reporting period, and then develop an action plan to implement the recommendations.

In addition to this, some Assembly staff undertook mental health first aid training to become peer support officers. This was part of a whole of Parliament initiative by the Work Health and Safety team in DPS to establish a peer support network. Peer support officers provide employees with a supportive, non-judgemental and confidential discussion to help with a difficult time or challenges they are facing in the workplace or in their personal life. They are not counsellors but can discuss options for accessing further support and guidance.

## Procedural training

We aim to provide all staff within our department with a range of external and in-house professional development opportunities in parliamentary procedure. The formal opportunities include the annual professional development seminar organised by the Australia and New Zealand Association of Clerks-at-the-Table (ANZACATT), and a parliamentary law, practice and procedure course delivered by a university in collaboration ANZACATT. In more recent years, as remote learning became more regular, we have also supported staff studying an intensive unit in parliamentary practice and management co-convened by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and McGill University.

In addition to this, we provide internal professional development opportunities so that staff can develop their knowledge of parliamentary practice and procedure. These activities include:

- committee inquiry debriefs
- sitting week debriefs for Chamber and procedure office staff
- sitting week reviews for all Assembly staff, facilitated by one of the clerks.

A working group of staff has identified a range of key competencies in parliamentary procedure relevant to different roles in the department, and over the next 12 months we plan to develop a training calendar covering these topics.

## Graduate program

The Legislative Assembly and Department of Parliamentary Services jointly recruited a graduate at the start of 2022 through the Victorian Government's graduate program. The program is designed to support the career development of graduates looking to begin a career within the Victorian Public Service. Our graduate started his program in the Legislative Assembly, working with the Procedure Office and Community Engagement. Following a rotation with the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, he will finish his year in the election transition team within DPS. Our department will participate in the graduate program again in 2022–23.

## Capability, workforce and succession planning

The Department's objectives are to provide procedural advice and secretariat support to the operations of the respective Chambers and committees. We provide a range of other services to members and the public such as tours and outreach, visitor management, event and project management, records custody and management, community and international engagement, and responding to public queries about parliamentary practice.

Clerks and their staff also have a responsibility to be custodians of the institution of a Westminster style parliament in addition to their more direct service delivery roles. The key assets of the department are therefore largely its people and the ability of their people to provide high level, apolitical services in a politically charged environment, along with technical/procedural skills, institutional memory and business continuity. While the historical focus of the Department has been on the accumulation of procedural expertise—which remains essential to our success—we now require a greater focus on:

- judgement and decision making
- expertise in parliamentary procedure and custom
- leadership, management and corporate governance skills
- interpersonal skills.

In conjunction with the Department of the Legislative Council, we are working towards building a capability framework. It will enable the Departments to:

- be transparent with staff about the skills and attributes required for roles
- provide clarity for staff and prospective staff about the accountabilities, autonomy and supports applying to roles
- obtain information about staff career objectives
- commit the required resourcing to support the implementation of the framework.

## Records management

The Assembly continued work on records management improvement initiatives over the past year. During the periods of extended remote working during the pandemic, it became critical that all staff in the Department had easy access to the documents they need to effectively and efficiently undertake their duties, and that departmental records were retained in accordance with legislative, Public Record Office Victoria (PROV), compliance and other requirements. Our focus for the year was to:

- combine all departmental records (excluding committees) in accordance with the Business Classification system, and with appropriate security access controls and ownership responsibilities
- develop guidance for Assembly staff undertaking projects on the effective use of SharePoint for collaboration between staff
- review archived records retained in hard copy and assess which records can be disposed of and which can be digitised
- review the Assembly's archives policy to reflect greater use of electronic records
- train staff on records management procedures.

## Procedure Office review

In the first half of 2022, we undertook a review of the Procedure Office. The staffing and structure of the Office had not changed for approximately 20 years and over that time, its role and responsibilities had changed significantly, with a much greater emphasis on digital delivery of services. We had also identified the need to better resource the regular review and updating of procedural resources, and the development of member training materials.

We engaged an external consultant to interview stakeholders and make recommendations about the activities undertaken and services delivered by the Procedure Office. The review also aimed to identify the best staffing structure to meet current and future work requirements.

The main outcome of the review was the establishment of a new ongoing Project Officer role to manage procedural and business improvement projects, lead the development of member and staff procedural training resources, and undertake high-level procedural research. We also updated all position descriptions, reallocated duties to clarify accountabilities and better distribute workload, and renamed some roles to better reflect their responsibilities and functions.

## Safety, risk and governance

### COVID-19 Subcommittee

The COVID-19 Subcommittee (CSC) was established in 2020 during the height of the pandemic. Membership includes the Parliament's Senior Management Group (SMG), and several key stakeholders across the three departments. Throughout 2021-22, the CSC continued to meet regularly to discuss the status of the pandemic and recommend initiatives to ensure the safety of members, staff and visitors while also ensuring that the Parliament remains a functioning workplace and legislature.

The recommended measures are based on the health advice from the Department of Health and the latest directions from the Minister for Health. All recommendations are approved by the Parliamentary Executive Group (PEG) before being implemented. Any recommendations affecting members or electorate officers are also approved by the Presiding Officers. Once approved, all information is communicated to members and staff by email and is also shared on a dedicated SharePoint site.

### Parliament House building works

Renovations of three Assembly offices and amenities spaces was completed during the 2021-22 year. The Parents Room was redesigned to offer a private space for parents and carers visiting and working in Parliament House. The public facing work area of the Procedure Office was modernised to reflect the changing nature of the work completed by the team and services needed by its customers. For the first time in the building's history, staff working on levels 1, 2 and 3 of the Legislative Assembly now have access to kitchenette facilities.



The redesigned Parents Room in Parliament House.

We have also started exploring options to improve the upper gallery of the Legislative Assembly Chamber. The project is designed to improve access to the upper gallery and occupational health and safety, and to enhance the visitor experience for guests.

## Visitor management

Under our improved visitor management processes, all non-passholders must be registered upon entering Parliament House. All passholders are encouraged to pre-register their guests to enable a quick and efficient entry.

To assist with the visitor registration process, we have developed a new online visitor registration system. The system allows passholders to register their guests by filling out a simple form accessible on their computer or mobile device. The form allows the passholder to register multiple guests at once, the date and time they are expected and how the passholder would like to be contacted when they arrive.

Visitors attending Parliament House who are not the guest of a passholder are required to fill in a similar registration form when they enter. The form is accessible on mobile devices through a QR code located at the entrances to Parliament House. Visitors are required to enter their details and scan and upload a photo of their identification for security purposes, ensuring that we have a record of all visitors.

## Emergency management

Ensuring we have safe and effective emergency management procedures continues to be a priority for our Department. The Assistant Clerk-Procedure and Serjeant-at-Arms performs the role of Chief Warden for Parliament House in conjunction with the Usher of the Black Rod. Floor wardens and area wardens are selected from parliamentary staff who have detailed knowledge of Parliament House including many Assembly staff. We have continued to provide regular training and conduct supervised emergency evacuation drills to obtain feedback on the effectiveness of our current procedures.

# Appendices

# Appendix A

## Reports on output measures

### Department of the Legislative Assembly

Output/Deliverable	Target	Actual
<b>Quantity</b>		
Procedural references—updates published biannually	2	2
Quarterly allowance reports published in accordance with <i>Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019</i>	4	4
Regional visits to schools to conduct parliamentary role plays	5	0 <sup>a</sup>
<b>Quality</b>		
Bills and amendments processed accurately through all relevant stages in compliance with constitutional requirements and standing orders	100%	100%
Member satisfaction that advice is responsive, prompt, clear and objective	80%	86% <sup>b</sup>
Teacher satisfaction with tours of Parliament for school groups	95%	100%
<b>Timeliness</b>		
Documents tabled within time guidelines	90%	100%
House documents available one day after sitting day	100%	100%
Online information relating to bills updated within one day	95%	100%
<b>Cost</b>		
<b>Total output cost (\$ million)</b>	<b>45.1</b>	<b>39.8</b>

a Due to COVID-19 restrictions, no regional visits were delivered this financial year. We have offered online incursions to regional schools instead.

b We take great pride in the timeliness and accuracy of advice given to members, and we are pleased with this result. However, there may be occasions where errors are made, resulting in member dissatisfaction, though we take care to prevent this. There can be circumstances where members may not be satisfied with the advice we give, despite its accuracy and timeliness. This is particularly the case where members wish to use parliamentary procedure as part of political tactics and we need to advise that their proposal or strategy is not allowable or procedurally correct. Taking into account the subjective nature of the target, we consider 80% to be a high benchmark.

## Joint investigatory committees

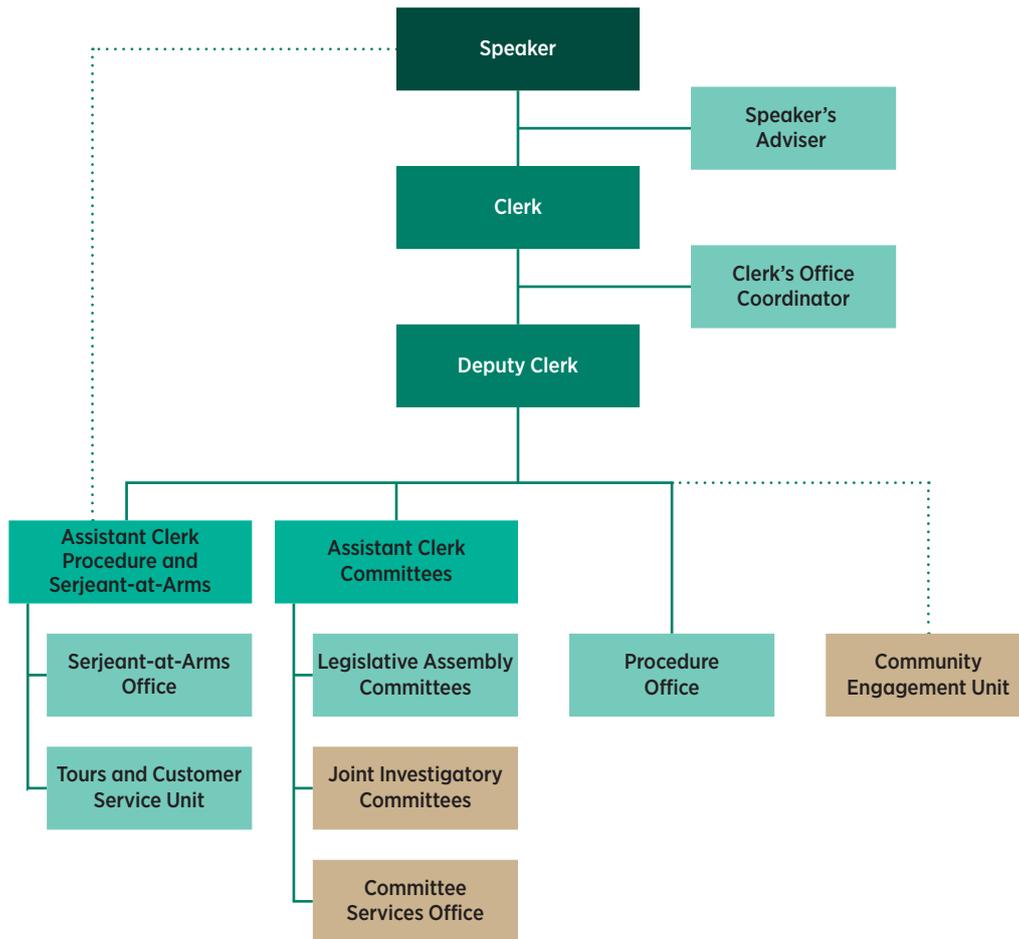
Output/Deliverable	Target	Actual
<b>Quantity</b>		
Reports tabled per annum	20	28
<b>Quality</b>		
Committee members satisfied that advice about procedure, research and administration is responsive, clear, objective and prompt	80%	100% <sup>a</sup>
Inquiries conducted and reports produced in compliance with procedural and legislative requirements	95%	100%
<b>Timeliness</b>		
Reports tabled in compliance with procedural and legislative deadlines	95%	100%
<b>Cost</b>		
<b>Total output cost (\$ million)</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>5.8</b>

- <sup>a</sup> This measure was based on a confidential survey in May 2022 of joint investigatory committee members. Due to the sometimes political nature of committee work, members may not always be satisfied with advice even when it is accurate. For 2021–22 members' satisfaction with the quality and responsiveness of committees advice has exceeded our expectations.

# Appendix B

## Organisation structure and corporate governance

Department of the Legislative Assembly organisational chart



## The Speaker

The Speaker is the principal office holder in the Legislative Assembly. The main elements of the role are chairing meetings of the Legislative Assembly, representing the Assembly at State and other official occasions, overseeing the operations of the Department and, jointly with the President, of the Department of Parliamentary Services.

Speaker, the Hon Colin Brooks MP, was elected on 7 March 2017, having represented the Electorate of Bundoora since 2006. He was re-elected on 19 December 2018.

## Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Bridget Noonan joined the Department in 1999 to work in the Procedure Office, and subsequently worked in a number of roles within the Office. She was appointed Assistant-Clerk Committees in 2006, Assistant Clerk Procedure and Sergeant-at-Arms in 2011 and became Deputy Clerk in 2013. In September 2017, Bridget was appointed as Acting Clerk and became Clerk in January 2019. Bridget has a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) from Melbourne University.

## Chamber Officers

### Robert McDonald, Deputy Clerk

Robert re-joined the Department in August 2013 as Assistant Clerk Procedure and Serjeant-at-Arms, having previously worked in the Procedure Office from 2004 to 2007. Robert was Manager, Chamber Support in the Legislative Council from 2007 to 2011 and Secretary to the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Economy and Infrastructure from 2011 to 2013. In November 2017, Robert was appointed Deputy Clerk. Robert has a Bachelor of Laws (Hons) and Bachelor of Science from Melbourne University.

### Vaughn Koops, Assistant Clerk Committees

Vaughn joined the joint investigatory committees as a research officer in 2003, and from 2005, worked as executive officer to five joint committees prior to his appointment as Assistant Clerk Committees in 2014. He was Assistant Clerk Procedure and Serjeant-at-Arms from July 2016 to June 2020 and returned to the role of Assistant Clerk Committees in July 2020. Vaughn has a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts (1st class Hons) from Auckland University and a Doctor of Philosophy from Melbourne University.

### Paul Groenewegen, Assistant Clerk Procedure and Serjeant-at-Arms

Paul joined the Department in 2009 in the newly created position of Manager, Tours and Customer Service Unit. In January 2018, Paul was appointed Assistant Clerk Committees and he rotated to his current role in July 2020. Paul has a Bachelor of Arts from La Trobe University and a Graduate Certificate in Management from Swinburne University of Technology.

# Appendix C

## Branch roles

### Clerk's Office

The Clerk's Office is responsible for the general management of the Legislative Assembly. This includes the provision of expert policy, procedural and corporate management advice to the Speaker. In addition, the Office is responsible for advising members on matters relating to the operation of the Legislative Assembly and its committees. The Clerk's Office also records the decisions and proceedings of the Legislative Assembly and ensures the passage of legislation is in accordance with legislative and procedural requirements.

The Clerk is the relevant officer for members' work-related parliamentary allowances under the *Parliamentary Salaries, Allowances and Superannuation Act 1968*. This role includes determining whether claims meet the requirements of relevant Tribunal guidelines and regulations and publishing quarterly reports.

### Committee Office

The Legislative Assembly has three standing committees, which were established at the start of the 59th Parliament:

- Economy and Infrastructure Committee;
- Environment and Planning Committee; and
- Legal and Social Issues Committee.

There are also five joint investigatory committees, comprising members of both Houses. Three of these are administered by the Department of the Legislative Assembly:

- Pandemic Declaration Accountability and Oversight Committee
- Public Accounts and Estimates Committee; and
- Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee.

The Assembly also has two domestic select committees appointed by resolution for the duration of the Parliament that work on domestic matters or procedures of the House:

- Privileges Committee; and
- Standing Orders Committee.

Committee secretariat staff provides administrative, procedural and research support to these committees. This includes coordinating public hearings and submissions, and writing briefing papers and reports. The Committee Services Office provides centralised administrative and corporate support to all committees. The Assistant Clerk Committees oversees this work, briefs the Speaker on committee operations, ensures compliance with relevant Acts, standing orders, Presiding Officers' directives and accepted practices and procedures, and monitors committee expenditure.

### Serjeant-at-Arms' Office

The Office of the Serjeant-at-Arms is, by custom, a long-established high-profile position recognised in Westminster-style Parliaments. The position has existed in Victoria since the establishment of the first Legislative Assembly in 1856. As Principal Executive Officer to the Speaker, Assistant Clerk Procedure and Serjeant-at-Arms is responsible for ceremonial events and the security of the Chamber. They also undertake procedural research and project management, assist at the Table on sitting days and oversee the production of certain House documents.

The Office provides a range of services to members, including managing accommodation within Parliament House and the Annex, administering allowances and former member support. It also manages media accreditation, supports functions and events held in Parliament House, and coordinates the Department's business planning and performance reporting.

## **Tours and Customer Service Unit**

Reporting to the Assistant Clerk Procedure and Serjeant-at-Arms, the Unit conducts community engagement programs such as public tours and presentations to school groups. With a major focus on programs for school children, including at VCE level, staff give presentations and deliver role plays at Parliament House, visit schools in metropolitan and regional Victoria, and provide a range of online programs. Staff also deliver specialist tours at Parliament House, including an architecture tour, an art tour, and an express photographic tour. In addition, the Unit provides mail and other support services including support to the Chamber on sitting days.

## **Procedure Office**

The Procedure Office provides administrative and research support to the Chamber and senior officers within the Department. The Office is responsible for answering inquiries from the Department's customers, including members, the media, government departments and the public. In addition, staff are responsible for the publication and distribution of House documents. This role includes ordering and proofreading the various prints of bills, preparing Acts of Parliament for royal assent, processing reports submitted for tabling and archiving parliamentary documents.

Staff undertake research and produce general reference material for the use of parliamentary staff and the Speaker on the various authorities, practices and procedures of the Legislative Assembly. One of the Department's major procedural authorities, LAPRAC, is also produced by Procedure Office staff, in consultation with the clerks. More specific research is undertaken to provide procedural solutions where precedents are lacking.

## **Community Engagement Unit**

The Community Engagement and Education Unit coordinates the delivery of community engagement activities across the Parliament in accordance with the community engagement strategy, provides communications services across the Parliament, delivers education resources in the community. The Unit is supported by staff from across the parliamentary departments.

# Appendix D

## Comparative workforce data

The following table discloses the head count and full-time staff equivalent (FTE) of all active employees of the Department, employed in the last full pay period in June of the current reporting period, and in the last full pay period in June of the previous reporting period.

### Head count and full-time staff equivalent—all active employees (2022 and 2021)<sup>a</sup>

	All active employees (head count)		Full-time staff equivalent (FTE)	
	June 2022	June 2021	June 2022	June 2021
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	20	23	19.6	22.6
Female	41	39	36.9	34.8
Self-described	0	0	0	0
<b>Age group</b>				
Under 25	0	2	0	1.6
25-34	25	21	23.6	20.0
35-44	14	15	12.4	13.6
45-54	13	16	11.9	14.6
55-64	8	7	7.6	6.6
Over 64	1	1	1.0	1.0
<b>Classification</b>				
VPS 1	0	0	0	0
VPS 2	5	5	4.6	4.6
VPS 3	24	26	21.5	22.4
VPS 4	6	6	5.6	6.0
VPS 5	16	16	14.8	15.4
VPS 6	8	7	8.0	7.0
Executives	2	2	2.0	2.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>56.5</b>	<b>57.4</b>

<sup>a</sup> The table excludes staff on leave without pay and staff seconded to other departments.

## Head count and full-time staff equivalent—breakdown for ongoing employees and fixed term and casual employees (2022 and 2021)<sup>a</sup>

	Ongoing employees <sup>b</sup>						Fixed term and casual employees			
	Full-time (head count)		Part-time (head count)		Full-time staff equivalent (FTE)		Number (head count)		Full-time staff equivalent (FTE)	
	June 2022	June 2021	June 2022	June 2021	June 2022	June 2021	June 2022	June 2021	June 2022	June 2021
<b>Gender</b>										
Male	14	18	1	1	14.6	18.6	5	4	5.0	4.0
Female	24	26	9	8	29.1	30.6	8	5	7.8	4.2
Self-described	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Age group</b>										
Under 25	0	0	0	1	0	0.6	0	1	0	1.0
25-34	12	14	3	2	13.8	15.2	10	5	9.8	4.8
35-44	9	10	3	3	10.4	11.6	2	2	2.0	2.0
45-54	9	13	3	2	10.9	14.2	1	1	1.0	0.4
55-64	7	6	1	1	7.6	6.6	0	0	0	0
Over 64	1	1	0	0	1.0	1.0	0	0	0	0
<b>Classification</b>										
VPS 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
VPS 2	3	3	1	1	3.6	3.6	1	1	1.0	1.0
VPS 3	15	16	6	7	18.7	20.2	3	3	2.8	2.2
VPS 4	2	3	1	0	2.6	3.0	3	3	3.0	3.0
VPS 5	10	13	2	1	10.8	13.4	4	2	4.0	2.0
VPS 6	6	7	0	0	6.0	7.0	2	0	2.0	0
Executives	2	2	0	0	2.0	2.0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>43.7</b>	<b>40.2</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>8.2</b>

<sup>a</sup> The table excludes staff on leave without pay and staff seconded to other departments.

<sup>b</sup> Ongoing employees means people engaged on an open-ended contract of employment who were active in the last full pay period of June.

# Appendix E

## Staff listing as at 30 June 2022<sup>a</sup>

### Clerk's Office

Bridget Noonan, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly  
Robert McDonald, Deputy Clerk  
Vaughn Koops, Assistant Clerk Committees  
Kate Murray, Project Officer (Parliamentary Procedure)  
Natalie Osborne, Clerk's Office Coordinator  
Amy MacKintosh, Digital Content Officer  
Xavier O'Brien, Graduate Recruit

### Serjeant-at-Arms' Office

Paul Groenewegen, Assistant Clerk Procedure and Serjeant-at-Arms  
Sarah Cox, Planning and Projects Manager  
Brenda Kittelty, Serjeant-at-Arms Office Coordinator

### Tours and Customer Service Unit

Audrey Lin, Manager, Tours and Customer Service Unit	Craig Foster, Tours and Outreach Officer
Bronwyn Gray, Tours and Outreach Coordinator	Grace O'Donnell, Tours and Outreach Officer
Mark Smith, Tours and Outreach Coordinator	Glen Putland, Tours and Outreach Officer
Ros McNally, Customer Service Coordinator	David Robertson, Tours and Outreach Officer
Baron Campbell-Tennant, Tours and Outreach Officer	Michael Gigliotti, Mail and Printing Officer
Nicole Cuiava, Tours and Outreach Officer	Michael Gruschel, Tours Booking Officer
Rosie Cobb, Tours and Outreach Officer	Jeremy Walsh, Speaker's Personal Assistant
Michael Cutrupi, Tours Booking Officer	

### Speaker's Office

Jason McDonald, Speaker's Adviser

### Procedure Office

Stefanie Tardif, Manager, Procedure Office	Megan Rocke, Customer Service Officer
Brittany Turner, Parliamentary Officer—Table Section	Danielle Broadhurst, Customer Service Officer
Steph Blackshaw, Parliamentary Officer—Papers Section	Melissa Morewood, Administrative Officer
Liesel Dumenden, Parliamentary Officer—Papers Section	

### Community Engagement Unit

Glenn Jeffrey, Assistant Manager  
Naomi Simmonds, Community Partnerships Coordinator  
Gaya Subramaniam, Community Partnerships Coordinator

<sup>a</sup> Includes staff on leave and being backfilled, such as parental leave, but does not include staff seconded to other departments.

## Committee Office

### Committee Services Office

Larissa Volpe, Manager  
Penelope Amy, Graphic Design and Publishing Officer  
Michelle Summerhill, Administrative Officer

### Economy and Infrastructure Standing Committee

Kerryn Riseley, Committee Manager  
Ana Maria Palacio Valencia, Research Officer  
Janelle Spielvogel, Committee Administrative Officer

### Environment and Planning Standing Committee

Igor Dosen, Committee Manager  
Rachel Macreadie, Research Officer  
Raylene D'Cruz, Research Officer  
Aimee Weir, Research Officer  
Helen Ross-Soden, Administrative Officer

### Legal and Social Issues Standing Committee

Marianna Stylianou, Committee Manager  
Katherine Murtagh, Research Officer

### Pandemic Declaration Accountability and Oversight Committee

Matthew Newington, Committee Manager  
Caitlin Connally, Research Officer

### Public Accounts and Estimates Committee

Jessica Strout, Executive Officer  
Charlotte Lever, Budget Estimates and Outcomes Analyst  
Krystle Gatt Rapa, Public Accounts and Audit Analyst  
Jack Fotheringham, Research Assistant  
Mathias Richter, Research Assistant  
Jacqueline Coleman, Committee Administrative Officer

### Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee

Helen Mason, Executive Officer  
Katie Helme, Senior Research Officer  
Simon Dinsbergs, Business Support Officer  
Sonya Caruana, Committee Administrative Officer

# Appendix F

## Legislative Assembly expenditure statement

Expenditure	2021-22		2020-21
	Budget	Actual	Actual
	\$	\$	\$
<b>Departmental expenditure</b>			
Cleaning expenses	440,000	490,755	444,842
Clerk's Office <sup>a</sup>	2,437,600	2,316,426	2,053,485
Community Engagement Unit	339,500	331,370	279,156
Procedure Office	1,050,400	1,067,152	785,184
Tours and Customer Service Unit	1,653,800	1,304,771	1,303,362
Speaker's Office <sup>b</sup>	225,700	147,482	-
Special Sitting	-	-	191,107
Auditor-General's Office audits	20,500	20,500	19,500
<b>Total—Department</b>	<b>6,167,500</b>	<b>5,678,456</b>	<b>5,076,637</b>
<b>Standing committees expenditure</b>			
Economy and Infrastructure	460,800	356,031	415,581
Environment and Planning	454,550	401,836	411,671
Legal and Social Issues	623,200	356,588	579,535
General expenses	161,450	78,126	72,216
<b>Total—Standing committees</b>	<b>1,700,000</b>	<b>1,192,581</b>	<b>1,479,003</b>
<b>Total—Operating expenses</b>	<b>7,867,500<sup>c</sup></b>	<b>6,871,037</b>	<b>6,555,640</b>
<b>Assembly Members—special appropriations</b>			
Members' salaries, allowances and on costs	32,310,141	29,175,421	28,188,087
Members' superannuation	-	2,730,082	2,503,187
<b>Total—Members' salaries and related special appropriations</b>	<b>32,310,141</b>	<b>31,905,503</b>	<b>30,691,274</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>40,177,641</b>	<b>38,776,540</b>	<b>37,246,914</b>

Note: This information is provided for the benefit of members. A complete set of financial statements of the Parliament of Victoria, including for joint investigatory committees, is provided in the Department of Parliamentary Services Annual Report for 2021-22.

a This figure includes expenditure relating to the Clerk's Office and Serjeant-at-Arms' Office.

b In previous annual reports, Speaker's Office expenditure was grouped under the Clerk's Office.

c This figure includes the following sources of funds:

- \$7.297 million—*Appropriation (Parliament 2021-22) Act 2021*
- \$0.0205 million—Special Appropriation under the *Audit Act 1994*
- \$0.550 million—Special Appropriation under s 94 of the *Constitution Act 1975*.

# Appendix G

## Joint investigatory committees expenditure statement

Joint investigatory committee	2021-22		2020-21
	Budget	Actual	Actual
	\$	\$	\$
Auditor-General's Office performance audit	-	-	17,600
Committee Services Office <sup>c</sup>	2,334,090	1,482,708	1,367,349
Electoral Matters <sup>b</sup>	451,800	376,197	414,982
Former committees <sup>d</sup>	-	-	210
Integrity and Oversight <sup>b</sup>	1,161,500	801,052	662,885
Pandemic Declaration Accountability and Oversight Committee <sup>a</sup>	218,600	153,191	
Public Accounts and Estimates <sup>a</sup>	1,222,160	918,941	1,242,239
Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations <sup>a</sup>	738,850	546,900	598,816
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,127,000</b>	<b>4,248,989</b>	<b>4,304,081</b>

a The Legislative Assembly currently administers the Pandemic Declaration Accountability and Oversight Committee, Public Accounts and Estimates and Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committees.

b The Legislative Council currently administers the Electoral Matters and Integrity and Oversight Committees.

c Both House Departments jointly administer the Committee Services Office. Its budget includes rental payments for committee accommodation and various other administrative overheads for whole of committee operations.

d The following committees were not reappointed for the 59th Parliament: Accountability and Oversight; Economic, Education, Jobs and Skills; Environment, Natural Resources and Regional Development; Family and Community Development; Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission; and Law Reform, Road and Community Safety Committee.

# Appendix H

## Functions, events and exhibitions held at Parliament House

The Department also provided assistance with the coordination of the following functions, events and exhibitions held at Parliament House. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions in place during the reporting period, some programs, functions and events were cancelled or postponed.

### Front Steps

Airalo (e-SIM company) advertisement filming  
Elk fashion shoot  
Independent clothing label shoot  
J'Aton Couture fashion shoot  
Trenery fashion shoot

### Queen's Hall (launches, receptions and conferences)

2021 Social Housing Volunteer Awards  
Alliance of Girls' Schools International Women's Day Breakfast  
Australian Citizenship Ceremonies  
Department of Parliamentary Services Conference  
Newroz (Kurdish New Year) celebration  
Nowruz (Iranian New Year) celebration  
Oxford Society gala dinner  
Pakistan Day celebration  
Schools' Convention—Primary Students  
Schools' Convention—Secondary Students  
The University of Melbourne's Pathways to Politics for Women reception  
Victorian Transport Association Premier's Breakfast

### Queen's Hall (exhibitions and displays)

1821 Battle of Crete Historical Commemoration exhibition  
AMAZE Fifth Anniversary of Inquiry into Services for People with Autism Spectrum Disorder exhibition  
Australian National Veterans Arts Museum (ANVAM) art exhibition  
Punjab Cultural Day exhibition  
Victorian Craft Awards exhibition

### Legislative Assembly Chamber

Australian Intersarsity Debating Championship Semi-Finals  
Institute of Public Administration Australia (Victoria) policy leadership course, Gain the Policy Edge  
YMCA Youth Parliament

## **Filming at Parliament House**

YMCA Youth Parliament documentary

VicScreen photography for gallery of film location screenshots

## **Federation Room**

Cancer Council Australia's Biggest Morning Tea

Crimestoppers Victoria stakeholder appreciation reception

Drink Victorian at Parliament House

Gippsland Trades and Labour Council presentation

Melbourne Vixens reception

Paddock to Parliament lunch

Premier's Wine Awards

Rare Disease Day reception

Richmond Football Club and The Korin Gamadji Institute presentation

The Stroke Foundation F.A.S.T. Awareness presentation

Western United Football Club presentation

# Appendix I

## Overseas travel undertaken by the Speaker

Speaker Brooks did not undertake any overseas travel in the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022.

# Appendix J

## Assembly business statistics

	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20
House related documents produced	183	154	137
Documents tabled by Command	4	4	7
Annual reports tabled	316	305	312
Documents tabled by leave	26	29	23
Other documents tabled	1,029	1,116	1,008
Messages presented	135	103	104
Reports presented by parliamentary committees	35	28	22
Questions asked			
In writing	639	2,713	1,004
Without notice	255	215	190
Constituency questions	505	430	380
Responses processed to questions in writing, constituency questions and adjournment matters <sup>a</sup>	1,615	-	-
Government bills			
Initiated in the Assembly	62	47	54
Amended in the Assembly	6	3	7
Passed both Houses	58	49	53
Reasoned amendments moved	7	6	12
Divisions	43	31	40
Petitions presented	41	45	70
Petitions listed for debate	29	43	52
General business notices of motion	14	21	40
Grievance debates	6	5	3
Matters of public importance	11	10	8
Statements by members	1,019	860	777
Statements on parliamentary committee reports	93	85	62
Pages of bills proofread	5,151	2,401	3,685
Sitting days	54	43	40
Hours including meal breaks	390:07	362:44	340:06

a Data only started being collected in 2021-22.

# Appendix K

## Committee statistics

### Committees under the administration of the Legislative Assembly

		Deliberative meetings <sup>a</sup>	Public hearings <sup>b</sup>	Inspections	Reports tabled
Legislative Assembly standing committees	Economy and Infrastructure	11	27	0	2
	Environment and Planning	19	17	4	1
	Legal and Social Issues	13	34	0	1
Joint investigatory committees	Pandemic Declaration Accountability and Oversight	2	33	0	0
	Public Accounts and Estimates	14	81	0	5
	Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations	23	0	0	18
Domestic committees	Privileges	10	0	0	3
	Standing Orders	1	0	0	1

a Includes subcommittee meetings.

b Number of public hearings held is the number of witness groups appearing before the committee. For instance, one day of committee hearings with five witness groups appearing would equate to five different public hearings for the purposes of the statistics.

### Committee reports tabled 2021–22

#### Legislative Assembly committees

##### Economy and Infrastructure Committee

- Inquiry into access to TAFE for learners with disability
- Inquiry into Commonwealth support for Victoria

##### Environment and Planning Committee

- Inquiry into environmental infrastructure for growing populations

##### Legal and Social Issues Committee

- Inquiry into responses to historical forced adoption in Victoria

#### Joint investigatory committees

##### Public Accounts and Estimates Committee

- Inquiry into the Parliamentary Budget Officer
- Report on the 2021–22 Budget Estimates
- Inquiry into Gender Responsive Budgeting
- Inquiry into Auditor-General's report No. 253: Managing School Infrastructure (2017): Interim report
- Report on the 2020–21 financial and performance outcomes

### **Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee**

- Alert Digests Nos 9–16 of 2021
- Alert Digest Nos 1–9 of 2022
- Annual Review 2020 Regulations and Legislative Instruments

### **Domestic Committees**

#### **Standing Orders Committee**

- Report on procedures for joint sittings under section 165AU of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008

#### **Privileges Committee**

- Report on certain complaints under Part 3 of the Members of Parliament (Standards) Act 1978
- Person referred to in the Legislative Assembly—Professor David Lindenmayer AO
- Person referred to in the Legislative Assembly—Ms Sarah Rees

# Appendix L

## Disclosures made under the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012*

The Speaker did not notify any disclosures to the IBAC under s 21(2) of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022.

The Parliament of Victoria's *Procedures for Making a Disclosure about a Member of Parliament* can be downloaded at: <https://new.parliament.vic.gov.au/contact/public-interest-disclosures>.

The Integrity and Oversight Committee did not notify any disclosures to the IBAC under s 21(2) of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022.

The Integrity and Oversight Committee's *Public Interest Disclosure Procedures* can be downloaded at: <https://new.parliament.vic.gov.au/get-involved/committees/integrity-and-oversight-committee>.

## Appendix M

# Documents and evidence disclosed under Standing Order 231(3) and Joint Standing Order 16(4)

For the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022, no disclosures were made.

# Appendix N

## Redactions authorised by the Standing Orders Committee under Sessional Order 16

For the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022, no redactions were made.



